

WRIA 14 Salmon Habitat Recovery Committee Interim Strategic Plan

In response to the recommendations of the SRFB Technical Panel's during their recent visit, the complete Committee has met with the strategic planning subcommittee to discuss a document that can be utilized and function as a temporary strategy until a finalized version can be established. This plan represents the results of that discussion.

Sherwood Creek is a highly important stream within the WRIA as it has substantial viable salmonid production and is a tremendous watershed, with approximately 40 miles of under-utilized habitat up to the headwaters. Its waters provide crucial spawning and rearing habitat for a diverse fish population, including Chinook salmon strays. This project ranked so highly as it provides numerous biological benefits, in addition to creating powerful partnerships, particularly within the local community of Allyn. As a group, the Committee understands that landowners and the community as a whole represent the very basis of the salmon recovery process and therefore place a very high value upon support from the public, to the extent that they will override the ranking of a lower priority stream on the tiered matrix to rate the project more highly. This point is illustrated repeatedly in this year's project listings, as the Committee decided to incorporate landowner's requests for assistance into complete and viable projects, bringing in various contributors to strengthen the initial proposal. Perry, Gosnell and Kamilche Creeks represent proposals that grew from the community to involve enhancement groups, timber companies and the conservation district, collaborations that will amplify the work of salmon recovery far into the future.

This year's project list competently addresses the numerous data gaps that reside within the region. The nearshore assessment builds upon and completes previous studies and upon conclusion, will provide crucial information and answer existing questions and those that have yet to be conceived. The fish passage project development echoes these same principles while giving the Committee the opportunity to steer future projects that will fit with the plan and alleviate the most detrimental impediments to fish migration.

While the Committees primary focus is not culvert replacements, they understand that the inventory currently underway brings forth present impediments to migration that need remedy immediately. Additionally, as the group attempts to answer the numerous questions that surround the areas waterways with assessments and inventories, these barrier replacements provide a direct avenue to the generally good habitat that exists within the WRIA.

The six projects presented by the WRIA 14 Salmon Habitat Recovery Committee have their solid backing and fall precisely where the group is currently working towards. As the questions become answered, the focus of this committee and this plan will become more refined.

